Corruption in Delhi Telephones

*232. CHAUDHARY HARMOHAN SINGH :

SHRI KANAKSINH MOHANSINH MANGROLA :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number and details of cases relating to corruption detected in Delhi Telephone during the last two years;

(b) the action taken in this regard; and

(c) the efforts being made to prevent such cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM) : (a) 22 cases of corruption were detected by the Vigilance Wing of MTNL in co-ordination with law enforcing agencies as well as on their own. These cases relate to illegal rackets for STD/ISD detected in different parts of the city during the last two years. Apart from this, some cases of fraud, such as, use of commercial FAX on concessional STD pay phone lines, bogus booking and in installation of telephones under SS Category, opening of telephones lines on the basis of fake documents, non-realisation of heavy outstanding dues for the telephones under the use of non-bona fide parties, theft of cable due to non-standard laying, un-authorised subletting of departmental quarters etc. have also been detected by the Vigilance Wing of the MTNL.

(b) 31 employees of various categories of MTNL have been arrested as a result of the raids conducted by the Vigilance Wing of the MTNL in different parts of the city in the last two years in coordination with CBI/Police. These employes have been placed under suspension and suitable action is being initiated against them. Action is also being taken to transfer some of these employees outside Delhi as a deterrent measure and it is proposed to keep a close watch on them in their new place of posting. Apart from these employees, 28 more employees, who have been found involved in various types of corrupt practices mentioned above, have been placed under suspension and departmental action is being taken against them.

(c) A full-fledged and well-knit vigilance organisation exists in MTNL under the charge of an officer of Senior Administrative Grade. The vigilance Unit keeps a constant surveillance on the sensitive points in the network. Surprise inspections have been stepped up in the Network and effective use of Flying squads is being made to check different points in the Network daily. Reward Scheme has also been introduced in the MTNL for informers who give valuable and effective information relating to the frauds. The various officers in charge of the Exchanges have been fully briefed about the preventive steps to be taken by them to check corrupt practices and they have been advised to strengthen the supervision. In view of the rapid increase in the complaints of diversion of telephones for illegal purposes, a dedicated CBI Cell under the charge of a Deputy Superintendent of the Police is being set up shortly in Delhi as well as in other metropolitan cities to deal with such cases in close co-ordination with the telecom officers. Action is also being taken to amend the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 to provide for deterrent penalties for persons indulging in illegal diversion of telephones.

Benami share applications

*233. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether another scam of sizable proportions pertaining to multiple and benami applications for shares in the primary market is in the offing;

(b) if so, whether the racket involving large-scale operations in benami share applications is going on with the help of certain bank officials at a high level